

M1519
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St. John's College, Santa Fe, New Mexico
Group III

Mr. Nyland: Work? Good. I'm not so difficult to get hold of. [laughter] It depends where you are. It would be very nice to get hold of a person even if he is not physically present, and maybe that would be a way.

About Gurdjieff: It's a system for a Man to become Conscious, and it is that ... the assumption that at the present time he has no Consciousness in the real sense of the word. We call it 'unconscious,' for what he has as mental functions at the present time in his particular life on Earth. The assumption is further—and it has to be accepted by each person who tries to do anything about himself—that Man is not complete as he is on Earth, regardless of the reason that he might bring forth, or even partly the acceptance of it. It is without any question that if you want to Work on yourself, the assumption is that something has to be done to Work; and that is in the sense of completing that a Man, when he is not complete, has to find out how to make himself more whole. The assumption further is that the universe is intelligently directed. So it is not a question of just spending your life here on Earth. There is much more to it, and to the extent that one can assume that there is something, it becomes worthwhile to find out what it is.

If one is interested in these kind of premises and if one actually wants to have something for one's life that can guide you, then there is a chance that if you understand what is meant by this kind of Work on yourself, that something can be built in you which will be the completion of yourself and that gradually, because of this, your personality can change into what we call an 'Individual.'

The question is only: Why do I want to become interested in that. As long as I assume that what I am on Earth and that it is sufficient, or that regardless of a few problems that I might have, that they can be solved so that they will not last forever but tomorrow maybe they are already much reduced, then I simply face the end of my life as something that is quite necessary and I cannot do very much about it. It does not mean that I am not interested in trying to

continue to live as long as I can, but I simply have assumed that my life at the present time is all that is given, and I don't have to think that I have to continue with it. So therefore the best I can make my life to be what it is now, and I believe that that is possible for me and that I don't need any particular kind of help or any kind of an instruction, that leaves a person out entirely of this idea of having to Work. Because ordinary maintenance in life is really not Work. It is only eating, drinking and sleeping and to take care of certain relationships, having enough work professionally done so that you earn a living, and if your aim is to make a lot of money, to make that; and in general to be interested in what a Man can become the way we know and whatever examples that you happen to think about that may intrigue you, that you simply set your life in that direction and then work for that.

The completion of a person's life cannot be in the fulfillment of more of his physical body, because that is already complete. So it has to be in something that is not material, and the only thing we know about material things is, besides that what is our material form—the physical appearance—are certain things which partly are abstract and partly complete; and although they may not be material in the way we know our physical body to be, we still will continue to call them more or less material, the same way as when you eat something, that it gradually goes over into vapor, it is still material in a certain form although it is not the same form as a liquid or the substance ... the solid out of which it came.

Work on oneself means I try to find a method by which certain changes can take place in me; in which my Consciousness can be formed out of my unconscious state; in which I will have the possibility of building a Conscience; in which I will also will have a Will of my own. All of this means, of course, that in the present state I don't have a Conscience, I don't have a Consciousness, and I have no Will. In the first place, it's a question of study of what I am, and that particular study has to be directed towards facts which are what they are and remain what they are and have an absolute value; that is, they have to become permanent for me and not subject to any kind of interpretation now or later, or by anyone else. I have to know that that what I am is reality so that when I do know that, that on the basis of that I can continue and consider that kind of knowledge as something that is strong enough, that is permanent, indelible, and will be useful for that what has to be built on top of it. If you say it has to be like a rock and not sand, it's just a little illustration.

The motivation for Work. Why do I want to Work: because I am dissatisfied with what I

am. I am a person with problems. I have questions, I cannot solve them in the ordinary sense. That is, I cannot solve them by means of reading or talking. I realize I cannot solve them by asking someone else a question for an answer, because it's not my own. I cannot take over what has produced results from someone else. I have to live it myself.

All these statements you can question. You have to verify it for yourself—that that it is so—and that could become the truth for you. Because if you don't, then you have to argue. And ultimately you will end up that the kind of thing that will count for you in your life, is based on your experience, and when you want it to have value for you, you must make sure that it always will be there.

With the assumption of a supreme intelligence in the universe, one must consider Man as part of the totality of life. When life exists in a Man, it's a question of why is life outside of a human being, even why is it in plants and animals. Why should I stop at the idea that life only exists on Earth. When there is supreme intelligence, there is of course no reason to assume that life must exist also somewhere else. If it does, what is the meaning. We consider life, in this present form of a human being, a temporary affair in which the understanding of that what is this form in which Mankind appears is only for him something that has to be done away with; and that the most important part of him is not the form but is life, and that is the reality for him is really his life. And his interest is in trying to see if this life, which he must assume to be Infinite—by that I mean endless and always-existing, it is life without end—that that for him could become his reality regardless of the form of his human Being in which he happens to live. And that the purpose of Man on Earth should be to free himself from the form, retain what is his life, continue with that regardless of whatever levels of Being it will have to go through until finally utter freedom is reached and what he then would call perfection or fusion with 'Infinity,' or in general with that what he calls 'God.'

This kind of Work cannot be done without a certain understanding of religion and an attitude which is to be serious and honest. To what extent a person wishes to be that, depends on what at the present time is his Conscience. If he would know exactly what to do, he would not have to Work further. So of course, I don't know what to do.

Now, we make a distinction between a level which exists on Earth in the form of a variety of human beings each having a level of their own but all belonging to the levels allotted to Earth. We assume that that what could take place is, when a Man evolves he goes through different

kinds of layers, each one of them higher than the previous one, and every one which is higher coming closer to the final end of Absoluteness. And Absoluteness is then defined as the all-pervading Omniscience, Omnipotence and Omnipresence—with other words, Infinity.

Why should a Man be bothered by it. Because he is not satisfied the way he is. He searches for something, that it can give him satisfaction. There are many religions and philosophies, some of which he knows and some he doesn't. For some he has to work in a certain way; he has to research and perhaps collect data; a Man can be interested intellectually or emotionally, he can also say it enhances the level of his Being, but it is still difficult for him, with that kind of a development, to act on it.

What a Man should become, in the terminology of Gurdjieff, is 'harmonious.' That is, that he can in all conditions be adaptable to whatever is required. That is, a Man when he lives on Earth, that he many times seems to be affected by the conditions as they are, and he reacts towards them in an automatic manner. He has no free Will. He has very often not even a direct activity; that what he does, he does many times because he reacts to what someone else affects him with.

I do not know how much you know about these ideas and what you have read. This is a very short introduction and a little dry, and it is trying to say in a few words what is really the meaning of this kind of philosophical system. But if you have questions it would be much easier to really introduce certain other elements which may be there when they are contained in your question. To the extent that your question is sufficiently sincere and deep enough, to that extent can one go in an answer a little bit more below the surface.

I hope you have questions.

Questioner: Dr. Nyland—Mr. Nyland, excuse me—you spoke of layers and Man. I have to assume that there are other layers below this layer. Is this correct?

Mr. Nyland: I believe so. I think in the first place, if there are layers of life, there is a layer of the Animal Kingdom and a layer of the Plant Kingdom, but below it there is a layer of matter as we know it, it is called simply 'stuff,' in which there is no animation. But then one goes from that what is life in a form only to the form itself. So, whatever the layers may be, it is a gradation of a certain ... partly material and partly spiritual.

Huh?

Questioner: Man always compliments himself in this world by thinking he's the only intelligent

animal.

Mr. Nyland: Yea.

Questioner: I was wondering what, uh, your feeling was on that.

Mr. Nyland: He's very low on the scale.

Questioner: In my mind, a dog is intelligent also.

Mr. Nyland: Sure. But the difficulty with a dog is, as an animal he has what we call two 'centers.' That means he has, of course, a physical center; and he has also a feeling and an intellectual center, but the quantity of material in such centers make up one center only. For instance, a dog or an animal has no particular idea about the future; he cannot anticipate, he cannot really create very much, and he cannot carry over, in inheritance to the next generation, what he has found out himself. There are limitations to his intellect, and there are limitations to his feeling—although it exists. Physically he can be even better than we are. As far as the plant is concerned, it's only a life in a form, and we call it 'physical.' Even if it bears fruit, it is still physical. There is no particular feeling in a plant. They are sensitive ... and they are chemically sensitive but that belongs to their physical make-up, when they turn to the Sun there is a law of attraction to their physical existence.

Now, if Man is three-centered he can assume that as far as the Earth is concerned he is the most intelligent entity on this Earth. But if I assume that the Earth is just at a certain level, and particularly in relation ... in one's own solar system and there is a level which I call the 'planets' and a level I call the 'Sun,' that there must be a difference between an Earth level and a planetary level. I've never been there, of course—and no one has—but if I consider myself in that what I am in my own kingdom, I know that there are different layers and when I compare my physical existence with that what I call 'feeling' and what I call my 'mind' functioning, there's also three different levels. So that is exactly the same, by comparison, as what the solar system would indicate, and in an astronomical sense it's the same as the place of the solar system of ours in relation to all solar systems. Or whatever there is that I understand of the Cosmos, of certain relationships of constellations, there are also laws in existence which divide certain entities from each other which, in relation to each other, are very much like my physical center and emotional and intellectually, related. So, I do not care if Man is so marvelously intelligent, I can call the intelligence of the universe with a different name.

That is one way of looking at it. The other is, if in my life as a Man unconsciously on

Earth I can have moments in which there is a different kind of an experience and which moment, if I do remember it well enough, indicates that at that time I seem to be much freer than what I am in ordinary life; and that at such a time there is a very definite insight in other things which are not of this Earth—and not by hallucination, but by actual experience; or that there is at that time—that point in my experience—an indication that the ordinary bonds of my different organs as they function do not exist, then I become a little suspicious that perhaps such states when they are accidentally possible also could become intentionally possible. And that's the second reason.

And the third reason is simply the assumption based on extra-sensory perceptions, clairvoyance, and all the different indications of a spiritualistic world. And I think to some extent no one can deny that anymore—certainly not anyone who studies psychology. So whatever we know about it, it is not so difficult to assume that it exists when it has been proven time and time again that there is very definitely an influence from a different level, not of this Earth. And I think that logical reasoning will require it. Because if I die physically, what happens to my feelings. And if at the present time there is the possibility of influencing someone at a distance, which is definitely is true, and when there are certain persons who have personal magnetism or who are media and by their own nature—without having studied anything—have clairvoyance, I have to find an explanation for these psychic phenomena. And it's not that I myself and everyone who is a common, ordinary person becomes of course interested in a lot of the stuff that is written about—it's, of course, nonsense—but when one has people who have really made a particular study of it, I think for them it has become much more of a reality in the last fifty years. That's the third reason.

The fourth reason is a religious one. And that becomes extremely personal for each person. But there is no question that for certain persons there is an absolute truth that something like what they call 'God' exists. And there is no possible argument about it; because if you say "He doesn't," they say, "Yes, He does, I know it." And how do you know? "I have prayed." Does He talk to you? "Yes, He talks to me." That's the end, and you cannot assume that such people are foolish. If they are foolish, they are just as foolish as the person who says that he is agnostic.

One can believe in layers or in levels, or not. I think the desire for us, being on Earth, to go to the planets and finally land on Venus or somewhere, certainly is an indication of a belief in something that perhaps could exist outside of the Earth and I think would be sufficiently intriguing to find out if there is life, or that the conditions are such that I can understand a little

bit more about the activity of the planets around the Sun.

I think it depends very much in what one has been interested and to what extent one has been conditioned. I think at the end of one's life one is much more inclined to assume that there are some spirits or that there is a Heaven, because one never can tell.

Yeah.

New Questioner: I don't understand the ... the role of humility in this system of Man's evolution.

Mr. Nyland: Humility? Barry, did I say anything about it?

Barry: Um, no.

Mr. Nyland: No. Where'd you get it.

Questioner: Um, well, from another religion; the Baha'i religion, it's an essential part.

Mr. Nyland: This is not Baha'i.

Questioner: Yes, I realize it, but I would like to know how it relates.

Mr. Nyland: Oh, if a person considers himself like St. Paul—that all men are sinners and he is the worst—it's a form of humility. If I gradually discover that I am controlled by circumstances and I have no particular activity on my own but that many times I just react, I will consider myself as a reacting creature and not as a Man. Then when I talk about myself as a Man, I'll say he's pretty small because most of it is reactive to someone else. If I consider that what are higher layers above me—and the Earth on which I live now is one—then in respect to a higher layer I become small, particularly when I assume that the higher layers have certain qualities which I don't have. If I have any kind of belief in what I call 'supreme intelligence,' that in the presence of that I become as if I don't exist, or insignificant.

I think if on the other hand I don't want to become or be affected by humility, then I take the opposite viewpoint: that I am somebody and that I can do this and that and the other. In the first place, I think that in general the people we know don't like that very much, and I'm put down as a conceited ass. I can stand that because it doesn't matter—I can easily afford to be conceited when I actually have knowledge—but when at the proper time it is asked of me to be what I, without any question, cannot be—that is, if I am full of knowledge and scientifically an inventor and they ask me, "and how are you towards your wife"—well, sometimes it's very difficult to say I'm a good father also. If I am professionally proficient, what may be the relation towards a God if that is a relationship of a private nature; many times I don't want to assume that that also must exist, because I would love to believe that my scientific, or whatever, endeavor in

ordinary life is due to *my* particular ability.

So, I think humility comes in for any one person who finds his proper place in relation to that what is above him and what is below him, and it behooves him to be meek whenever anything is above him, even if he doesn't understand why. But it may even be that in acknowledging that what is above him, he may wish to be 'friends' in the good sense of the word, and in the olden days make sacrifices to the gods Above because they are more powerful. Then I become very humiliated in the eyes of the thunder or lightening when they can burn my house down and I can't do anything about it than just get a little water.

You have to believe in forces that are stronger than I am and forces that are weaker than I am. I have a certain place inbetween all kind of forces, and I'm subject to all of them, and I myself become master of that what is below me. If I require humility, or if I am required to be meek regarding that what is higher, I would also require that the fly is in humility regarding me. There's nothing wrong with using the word. But when it is used in connection with that what is higher as the ultimate and I know how long a road I would have to go through, I think I become meeker and meeker, the more I realize what I really am. Baha'i says that too, and so does Gurdjieff.

Yeah?

New Questioner: Is it simpler, uh, to do something which makes it possible for you to see something.

Mr. Nyland: Not necessarily. Why would seeing be connected with the doing. The doing may be quite mechanical and may not give you anything new that you then can see. To do a thing may be repetitious. When I do certain things in order to acquire more knowledge, I will be able to see more. When I climb a mountain, I will be able to see from the top of the mountain. So in that sense, of course, that what I wish to do can be made to connect it with that what I wish to see. But it is really not the seeing that I want. I want the development of myself at a certain state in which more seeing is logically assumed to be the case; and besides more seeing, also more able to do, more able to feel, more able to be really a Man, and I don't limit it to the seeing only. Maybe you didn't mean it in that sense, but it is implied, of course, that everything I see depends on the level where I am. If I want to see more, I have to do some Work to get to the next level.

Yeah?

New Questioner: Should Man be at all concerned with the lower levels?

Mr. Nyland: Oh, I think he should.

Questioner: So, then, what follows is...

Mr. Nyland: Yea.

Questioner: ...does Man carry over some possible empathy or consciousness of his previous existences in the lower layers.

Mr. Nyland: That is, of course, the assumption: that life continues to exist and takes on different forms. And the assumption is, further, that that what is your present life has existed in some form which was also you.

Questioner: Well, okay.

Mr. Nyland: You see, there is no real reason for assuming it. It is nice to assume it, and I would like it to be because then I can trace my 'life,' as it were, through different recurrences or, uh, different states of appearances either on this Earth or anywhere else. If it's a reincarnation problem, I love to assume that I have existed already for many, many years.

Now, if you want to consider the possibility of reincarnation or the recurrence of life as one person in different forms at different times—that that is a progress towards his life for further understanding—then you have to assume that what he is at the present time may have come from a lower level of Being. Then I can say "Yes, maybe I was a mouse." But you see, I have no particular consciousness regarding that, and even if I go to a clairvoyant, they will tell me that I have existed in the middle ages or during the ice age, or something, but I've never appeared as an animal or as a plant to their knowledge or to their perception; and although it is not excluded, it's a little useless because I think theoretically I can come to a much better conclusion: that is, if a plant and an animal and a human being belong to a certain possibility of development which is separated by means of what we call centers 'one, two and three,' that then the fact that a Man has reached a three-centered state may mean that he has gone through one and two, but he never will recur ... have to recur to that because he is already three, and there is definitely a relationship between one, two and three centers. But you see, it is difficult, again, if I want to prove it, because I do not know of any plant that can walk; that is, I do not know how to change a one-centered being into a two-centered one, and I don't know how to change a two-centered being into a three-centered. So, apparently there is a different kind of a law—why they are related as forms of life.

There is no reason to assume that in that kind of a relationship that Man has to undergo

certain conditions in order to free his life from the conditions in which he finds himself. And if that becomes an aim for a Man—that actually he wishes to be free or set his life free—then the assumption can be that although he may have in this life certain obligations and obstacles and difficulties to overcome and in general to live out that what is the need for the freeing of his life, that during this lifetime as a Man he is not as yet confronted with the difficulty that an animal might have in living out its own life as an animal. And there may be, at times, a law for that: that life as a whole—and I take it now separate from any form—may require a kind of a knowledge which you might say is ‘all-around’ and may be in line with Omniscience.

Because I cannot stop at that particular point of saying, when life is Infinity or eternal and I say then, glibly, it has to be ‘Omniscient.’ What do I really mean by Omniscient; is it only the knowledge of Man, or should it be the knowledge of an animal, and perhaps even the knowledge of a plant. And I say, you have a very difficult time in even trying to prove it in the laboratory, because you are not familiar with how to change one center to another. But philosophically it’s very interesting to think about it; at the same time, I’m afraid it has no practical value. At the time when the final solution will become known, is when Man when he grows, and let’s say grows from the level of Earth—at the highest level of which he can be on Earth—to the next level, which in our terminology is the level of the planets because those are emotional states, that then in that state he can be Objective regarding the lower level, which is a physical state. And then he may have, in that state of emotional activity, or entity, the ability to know what took place and what is taking place on Earth, in the forms below him. You see, I must assume that if there is Omniscience, that it must apply to a higher level of Being in including more ‘Omni-’ in the sense of ‘science.’

You see what I mean by that. I say philosophically it’s ... of course it’s interesting. The practical value, I cannot test it; and the only way by which it could become practical is for me to grow and to come to a level where I actually can have that kind of an opinion. When I am free from the bondage of Earth, I surely can be Objective about everything that is taking place on Earth. As long as I remain on Earth, I’m in the midst of it; it’s impossible for me to free myself from my subjectivity.

Questioner: Well, are animals on a different level than the standard level of the Earth?

Mr. Nyland: They all live on Earth, so they represent levels of Earth. The fact that they are here means they belong here. Only, I must assume that there are different levels on Earth, the same

way as I know there are different levels of interest in me. I may like funny papers and I may want to study Plato; it's a different level. I can say one flower is very complicated, another very simple; maybe it's a different kind of level.

All right?

New Questioner: Mr. Nyland, when you talked about in order to attain Consciousness you must Work, would you define for me what you mean by Work.

Mr. Nyland: I said Work on one's 'self.'

Questioner: Yes.

Mr. Nyland: Right. I want to go in the direction of freedom.

We take it now step by step. You agree?

Questioner: Yes.

Mr. Nyland: I want to find out what it is to be free from subjectivity. Because when I live on Earth, I am subjective—by definition. We simply call it that way. You can say 'unconscious,' it's all right. I want to be free from that unconsciousness, I call it 'Consciousness.' When I say I want to be free from subjectivity it has to become non-subjective, I call that 'Objective.' Right? Therefore, when I now wish to Work on myself with that aim, I have to find something that could start to work as an Objective faculty notwithstanding my subjective environment and my own subjectivity. Therefore I am faced with the question: How can I be, as a subjective entity being hundred percent subjective, even happen to think about the possibility of something else that is not subjective. And I have to admit, pragmatically, that that is the case; because I do consider the possibility of an Objectivity, that must come from somewhere in my life and it has to come from that what I have experienced, somehow or other in my life, which I then have called an Objective 'something' as an experience.

Now, on that again, if we are still together, we can go on, you see, but it does not mean that you have to agree with me.

Questioner: Uh, huh.

Mr. Nyland: I say, in my case I know of such instances which, at that time, gave me hope that the possibility of Objectivity existed. When I consider my state of mental functioning—unconscious—I must assume that there is something that I consider Conscious, and I can describe it in many ways. When I say I am 'incomplete,' I must consider the possibility of completeness. When I am finite, I must consider the possibility of Infinity.

So, it doesn't matter. I am, at the present time, interested in the possible development in the direction of becoming free from the subjectivity of the Earth and the subjectivity of myself. I wish to create something that is going to help me.

I now imagine that what could help me to exist. I call this an 'as-if' existence, simply because I do not know that it does exist or not exist. I assume its existence. Now, I treat that as reality, and I say this non-existence, or an 'as-if' existence, should function for me in such a way that that what it receives, as Observation of me, is Objective.

Did you follow me so far?

Questioner: I think so.

Mr. Nyland: Good. That what then is still 'as-if' receiving Objective facts about myself becomes, then, real. You see, it cannot be helped, because now that what was the 'as-if' as a form which starts to function receiving now impressions, facts about myself which are real because *I* exist, then that 'I'—that is, the instrument which is now recording—is also in existence.

If we can agree so far, then we have the beginning of what we call an 'I', which is nothing else but a recording agency for Observation and that what is being Observed, which is me as my body and personality.

Now, if I want to see how to develop this particular 'I' so that if it could grow up when it is being fed—and fed the right kind of food—that then ultimately it could be of value to me when it is full grown and is then an Objective something full grown, it would enable my subjectivity to profit by the presence of that Objectivity. So then I face the question, how can I make it grow. In exactly the same way as I created it in the first place, I have to continue to wish to create it and continue to wish to receive facts about myself which I call 'Observation.'

Now, I have to face the problem that the facts have to become reliable. Therefore I say, if they are reliable they could become Objective when they are not subjective facts. And looking over that what is my own subjectivity, I know that I am subjective in my feeling and subjective in my thought processes. They are functions of my subjectivity, so whenever now a fact is registered and there is something of anything subjective coming from my feelings into that kind of statement or anything from my mind affecting that statement, then the fact becomes a little soiled by a little bit of subjectivity, and it is not hundred percent Objective.

fact—that is, a fact by means of a mental apparatus which is now functioning in an Objective sense—cannot be interfered with by any feeling, because that would make it subjective. This I call ‘Impartiality.’

And also, I do not want my mind as it usually functions in a subjective way to interfere with the interpretation of what is now a so-called ‘Objective’ fact, neither do I want any associative way of thinking to enter into this Objective faculty as it is now Observing. The only way by which I can change a mental process to a non-anticipatory or a non-memory quality is to have that what takes place in the mind as registration occur at the same time when the actual fact takes place. I call that an ‘instant’ or I call it ‘Simultaneity,’ and if I wish to be free from any kind of a thought of my mind, I have to free myself from thinking or anticipating the future, or even thinking or recalling facts of my memory. So, the only time when there is that kind of an absoluteness in my mind, I have to come back to the registration of the moment and then the recording, at the moment, of that what takes place.

Now, that’s a long explanation, but it illustrates the requirements that are necessary for the obtaining and maintaining of an Objective faculty, ultimately hoping that it will grow out to become a real ‘I’ for myself—that is, Observing, which is an intellectual process or it is a knowledge which reaches me through my intellect, and also a knowledge which can reach me through my intuition. Those are the two possible roads, but both end up in the mental knowledge as a fact being registered; and registering it now Objectively, it means it has to be an Impartial Observation and it has to be a Simultaneous, Impartial Observation.

This particular attempt—to try and create ‘I’ and to make it function—I call ‘Work on myself,’ and I illustrate that what is the activity of this Objective faculty by saying that the mental process of recording is not thinking but it is an ‘Awareness,’ and when the Awareness is continued it becomes a state of being ‘Awake,’ so that then the facts as they are registered become facts for my Conscious state.

So far so good? So, that is Work. How to do it: I take the opportunity of knowing that a certain part of my brain is still sufficiently impressionable to try to use *that* for the field of operation of this Objective faculty, which I try to build. That particular part ... or those two parts do exist in the brain, I now create with the intention that they have to receive Objective facts, or they have to register facts in an Objective sense about myself. Because that’s the only thing I can offer. I have nothing else that could be Observed that I could control. I can say I could also

look at things Objectively from the ‘outside,’ but it won’t help me because it is not part of me. I want to have something that ultimately can be of use to me. So it becomes Work on ‘myself’ in saying that that what is now Objectively trying to function, is Observing that what I am, and I limit this—what I am now—to one third of myself which I call my ‘physical body,’ and I say whenever the physical body exists, it is sufficient to be an object for the Observation process.

The reason I select that one third as physical body is to make it a little easier. Because if ‘I’ has to exist in Observing my feeling center, or the processes of feeling or even the processes of mind and the requirement is that the registration has to be Impartial and it has to be non-associative or Simultaneous, that ... I have a very hard time when I Observe feeling, which is hundred percent partial, and when I Observe mental functions, which are hundred percent subjective. So I take my physical body, and in order to eliminate the subjectivity of the physical body, I say I am only interested in the fact that my physical body exists. And the reason for that is that the manifestations of my physical body indicate an aliveness on the part of myself, and that my real problem is to bring about the contact between that what is an Objective faculty and the fact of my life.

There is the whole thing in a nutshell, you see, but it is extremely difficult.

New Questioner: Why are things initially, uh, outside of yourself not useful to yourself. Why can’t they be Objective.

Mr. Nyland: After some time this ‘I’ has to become a guide; that is, I want to use it. Because there is not much use for me to have something outside of me, or more or less separate from me, which is Objective. Because my aim is to become *totally* Objective: as a different kind of a person.

You see, I think we have agreed on that: that when a Man is not complete he would like to become more complete. It would mean that the different functions of him—that is, mostly his feeling center and his intellectual center—should then start to function in an emotional sense as real feeling and in an intellectual sense as real Objectivity. That is, he wishes to become a Conscious, Conscientious Man with a Will. If I now have something that is functioning separate from me and is Objective, I would like to utilize that ... those attempts that I have made to create this for my own benefit, to let myself be, under the influence, changed as a result of the presence of the ‘I’ with what I am—I call that now ‘It’; and that there is a definite step afterwards, that when the ‘I’ has grown sufficiently and would be able, as it were, to act on ‘its own’—on the

basis of 'I' only—that then it could come and join me—that is, this 'It', my body and the organs of feeling and thinking—into that activity which is now unconscious, and that the presence of my 'I' will gradually change my unconscious states and activities into Conscious ones and Conscientious.

You see, I cannot do that when I become Objective to the outside world. The outside world is not mine, and you can never change it.

You understand that.

Questioner: Yea.

Mr. Nyland: It can be changed in a subjective way by looking at the outside world and using my subjective organs.

Questioner: Well, why is that only subjective?

Mr. Nyland: Because it is not free from personal interpretation. You didn't understand that. You don't understand what is meant by Impartiality. Impartiality is the only way by which I get a cold fact. A fact only. I want to find out, first, what it is if a Man could exist when the three centers of himself can function independently of each other. It would require much more to explain really why that is so, but if the ultimate aim is for Man to have three centers fully developed and that then he would like to become an Individuality and that that would require a certain combination of his three centers, even full-grown as three bodies they first have to be free from each other, and then be combined in a harmonious way. That in general is the answer.

So my interest is to find something that can function purely intellectually, and I call that a 'registration' intellectually of a fact without interference of any of the other centers—you see, without interpretation in any way associative, or in any way a partiality which makes me like or dislike that what I have observed ... or that what the 'I' has Observed.

All right?

New Questioner: Why couldn't you get your three centers not only working harmoniously with each other, but with other centers.

Mr. Nyland: Which other centers.

Questioner: These others around me.

Mr. Nyland: [chuckle.] I think so. I think Man can become harmonious and then form an orchestra. But, you see, I have to have a good instrument first. It's quite right: If that would be your aim, we can have music of the spheres. But I cannot do it when I start out with it and I have

nothing to start with.

Questioner: Yes, yes.

Mr. Nyland: I have to start with something that I say, "This is my instrument, now let me see if it can be in tune with yours." And I hope that someone else also is tuning up his particular base or oboe or whatever it may be, so that afterwards maybe there is really a full grown 'I' who can be the director of an orchestra. You can say there is nothing wrong with all kind of theories, but if I want to become practical I have to start at 'A.'

All right?

Questioner: Yes.

Mr. Nyland: Good. Yeah.

New Questioner: Um, I was reading... Gurdjieff suggested that when a Man is trying to develop a Will of his own and he has eliminated the buffers that he has...

Mr. Nyland: Is that Gurdjieff?

Questioner: Yes, uh...

Mr. Nyland: Buffer?

Questioner: It was Ouspensky's...

Mr. Nyland: Yea, yea. [group laughter]

Questioner: ...um, account of what Gurdjieff had said.

Mr. Nyland: I make a distinction between Ouspensky and Gurdjieff.

Questioner: Well, he's discussing what Gurdjieff is teaching.

Mr. Nyland: That's what *he* says.

Questioner: Oh, I see. [laughter] Well, there's no point in my asking the question.

Mr. Nyland: I do not know! It may be an interesting question. Go ahead and ask it. It's quite all right.

Questioner: Well, he was saying, uh, that Gurdjieff suggested that this Man who is in a state of not having a Will and then he subjects himself to a Man who has a Will, and I wanted to know if that was necessary.

Mr. Nyland: I don't think so.

Questioner: All right.

Mr. Nyland: I think it's helpful sometimes. You know, it's helpful sometimes. If I am a little weak and I cannot cross the street, I'm very, very happy if someone else will help me across.

But it's not the idea I have for myself. I would like to get across on my own steam. If I all the time believe that someone else ought to help me or that I should be under the influence of someone who's stronger than I am, I may as well sit at the feet of Gamaliel and hope for the best. But you see, it is not the idea that the Man then is on his own and has enough substance for himself to even be considered a Man.

As I say, it's very nice: if I want to learn how to skate, I love to look at someone and perhaps even he holds me by my hand and tells me, "You do this and you do that, and you do this," and then you skate. Well, it ends up that I have to do it myself, and fall down.

Questioner: Would you, um, talk a little bit about what Gurdjieff did at his school in Paris?

Mr. Nyland: No. No. No. Why should I.

Questioner: Well, I was trying to, um, figure out how your ideas could be related.

Mr. Nyland: What kind of ideas.

Questioner: That someone who's learning to Work on himself, subjecting himself to the Will of another person.

Mr. Nyland: Oh, are you still at it?

Questioner: Well, I wanted to know if I could associate that idea with how Gurdjieff conducted his school.

Mr. Nyland: Ha, ha, ha. Well, he was a very strong person, and I'm sure that he asserted his Will on some other people, and I'm also certain that there were a lot of people who were quite willing to have that done to them. I also know that when it has happened, that at a certain time Gurdjieff chased them away. All right? Including Ouspensky. That's why I think that Ouspensky said it.

Yeah.

New Questioner: Is it necessary to Work in a Group... in a Group, Working on oneself?

Mr. Nyland: It depends a little bit what a person is. There are people who want to do it all by themselves, and for them to say "You'd better go to a Group" is already so antagonistic that perhaps they wouldn't even want to do it.

I think for a person who is more or less open, simply to say, "I have to have the Group" is exactly the same as being dependent on the Will of someone else. So, in between there is a solution. When I say, "perhaps a Group can help me," I go to a Group to try to find out. Then if I decide that it is of use to me, then I can follow my own decision and stay away or continue. If I'm not entirely clear and apparently there are people who go to a Group who perhaps are a little

bit further advanced than I am, then I become meek in the sense that we mean it, and I say, “Perhaps someone else knows a little more. Maybe I should go to the Group even if I don’t want it now, and perhaps something will rub off on me so that afterwards I will bless the Group.”

I say it depends entirely on the kind of a person that one is. I think it is very necessary at a certain time to learn how to get along with a Group, particularly when one’s desire is to stay away from it. And I think it’s also important that a person who always wants to go to a Group, at times should stay away. But what will be the decisive factor. In the first place, a person in whom you have belief who might give you advice. But the final, which is the criterion—that what for me becomes the critical point—is my own experience, and if I now know that with a Group I don’t seem to get anywhere, without a Group I don’t seem to get anywhere, then I’m up against it. So then I say, “I’m now without a Group. Now let me see how far I can go.” Well, I read. I try to put to practice certain things. I don’t know anything more than that what I read or have heard a little bit, and then it doesn’t have much of a result or I become suspicious that I’m on the wrong road, which is quite possible.

If one is honest, you certainly will know that perhaps you don’t know everything yourself. So then, if you are going to a Group and I see other people who are struggling in the same way as I do, I may feel a little comradeship but at the same time I may not have trust in it until somehow or other I get information that puts me on the right road and then I have a chance to check my behavior against someone else and I acquire a certain amount of knowledge which I could not have acquired by means of staying home and being by myself.

There is no rule for it. I think there is a necessity at a certain time to submit to the Will of someone else, but if that is required, I have to have something with which I can submit; otherwise it has no meaning. If there is a Will of someone else, I’ve got to have a Will which I submit. Because I have no Will, I am a weakling, so of course someone else can lord it over me. There is no rule; at the same time, there is a very definite requirement of considering it: There are, apparently, Groups, and there are apparently people who profit by Groups, and there are, in the sense of Gurdjieff, have been Groups where he was, even where Ouspensky had Groups.

I would say there ought to be some kind of a meaning in a Group, and that might make me a little apprehensive if I say, “I don’t go to a Group.” Now you’re up against it, because you still have to decide it.

Yea. Stand up for a moment, I want to see you. Yeah.

New Questioner: I wanted to ask to what extent Ouspensky fits in to the Fourth Way, and uh...

Mr. Nyland: He does entirely.

Questioner: Uh...

Mr. Nyland: Hundred percent Fourth Way.

Questioner: Well, how much of Ouspensky does one have to learn...

Mr. Nyland: Oh, I don't know! [chuckle]

Questioner: ...before understanding Gurdjieff, or before beginning to understand Gurdjieff.

Mr. Nyland: I don't think that Gurdjieff considered Ouspensky the mediator...

Questioner: Well, I ... I...

Mr. Nyland: ...that one had to go through Ouspensky to reach Gurdjieff.

Questioner: Even if one is quite new in this.

Mr. Nyland: Yea, yea—also. I think there were lots of people who were quite new and came to Gurdjieff direct, without knowing anything about Ouspensky. I think that Gurdjieff wrote the book All and Everything for everybody.

Questioner: Well, why is it one must reject Ouspensky.

Mr. Nyland: No, I don't say that. She was talking about 'buffers' and it identified her as a Ouspenskyite, and I want to talk about Gurdjieff. I have special reasons why I want to talk about Gurdjieff and not Ouspensky. Same reasons I would have ... I would love to talk about Aristotle and not about Plato.

Now, you ask me why I don't like Ouspensky: Because I like Gurdjieff better. What is wrong with Ouspensky? It is not All and Everything. And I think that ought to settle the question.

New Questioner: Mr. Nyland, how do Sufis, compared to All and Everything.

Mr. Nyland: Who? Which?

Questioner: The Sufis.

Mr. Nyland: Oh, Sufis are very lovely.

Where are you. Yes, there's a great deal in Sufis, even to the extent that some people think that Gurdjieff got everything from Sufis. Have you read that unfortunate book?

Questioner: No.

Mr. Nyland: What?

Questioner: No.

Mr. Nyland: The Teachers of Gurdjieff, haven't you read that?

Questioner: No.

Mr. Nyland: It's really too bad when you are... Are you a follower of Sufi?

Questioner: No.

Mr. Nyland: Not yet. Just interested. Well then, don't read it. I think it has been said by a few people who also happen to know a little bit about Gurdjieff, that Gurdjieff was very much influenced by Sufi, and that he studied with them and that what afterwards appeared at the Prieuré as the so-called 'School for the Harmonious Development of Man' was hundred percent Sufi-inspired. I think that is a very great exaggeration.

That there are certain things in Sufism which belong to the Near East; and when a man like Gurdjieff, being brought up there and being interested in all kind of philosophies including the mystical from the Islamic faith, that he then of course, having associated with many Mohammedans would find out something about Sufi. And that I think that when Sufis—and we can assume that that might be true—that they had certain traits and dexterities which they would like to teach to aspiring young pupils; and Gurdjieff was one of them at a certain time, every once in a while maybe even going from one to the other.

But you see, that becomes a little absurd, that when the so-called 'teacher' of Gurdjieff who at that time lived somewhere near Alexandropol—or wherever it may be—was able to tell what Gurdjieff had done in his later years having written All and Everything, having gone through the Remarkable Men story of twenty years' search somewhere and also knew all about the so-called 'esoteric' knowledge of Gurdjieff; it's a little amazing, when Gurdjieff as a young man being there and those being old men, then as such an old man still knows everything that Gurdjieff had done in the following thirty years. But since you haven't read the book, you do not understand my particular cynicism.

Sufi, as a mystical religion and based on Mohammedanism, has very definitely certain rules for a human being which he could follow, and could follow with advantage. Since it is mystical and since it is based on certain conditions which do not immediately apply to the Man in the Western world and quite definitely not in an industrial world and quite definitely not in a country which emphasizes money as one of the main objects to obtain, and definitely not in a country like this where gradually the edges are worn off regarding respect for the past generation and where there are questions which now come up which never will come up in the Near East, then

Sufi becomes a little bit limited in the application for people who now live in an ordinary existence in ordinary life and are very simple and have no inclination whatsoever to become mystical. So, it is very good as far as it goes, and sometimes—if you read, for instance, Inayat Kahn—a little infantile. But sometimes the stories in Persian are also quite lovely and have a definite meaning and may sometimes seem a little bit childish, and in reality have much more content than one first would assume.

I think a great deal can be uncovered in Sufism, but to consider it a panacea in the sense that it is something you can apply at any moment of the day, I doubt it very much. It always requires a certain very definite attitude in which one separates out from the world, and without having a chance to acquire something that would be useful in this world—unless one lives for a long time in that atmosphere and then is not acquainted anymore with the world where one came from.

But, study Sufi. It's quite all right. But it will not give you, I think, what a person needs when he wants to live now.

Any other questions about Gurdjieff, what you have read? Or ... or what else.

New Questioner: Does Gurdjieff say anything about Karma?

Mr. Nyland: Oh, I think he did.

Questioner: I've read Ouspensky

Mr. Nyland: Yes. It is all right. 'Karma' is a very simple word anyhow. Even Gurdjieff could use it. But of course, Ouspensky was a little bit more, I'd call it, 'Indian-adjusted.'

Yea.

New Questioner: Um, Ouspensky says somewhere that the Fourth Way is a way where you don't have to have faith in it.

Mr. Nyland: Well...

Questioner: What would ... how ... now what would Gurdjieff...

Mr. Nyland: What would he say?

Questioner: ...say about something like this.

Mr. Nyland: What would I know!

Questioner: Well, what would you say.

Mr. Nyland: I don't care what Ouspensky has said. I don't think Gurdjieff would care at all what Ouspensky has said, and I don't care at all what Ouspensky has said. I don't believe it. I think

it's idiotic, such a statement. I don't do anything without faith. When I sincerely hope for something, I have to have faith in that it exists, that that what is described is right and that I am able to do it. Everything is based on faith. It's another form of trust. Nothing happens when I don't believe in it. If I honestly want to do something, I have to have faith in my ability. Faith is not only in relation to God. Faith can exist between ordinary human beings. I say "I have faith in you," it means I trust you. I do not know where Ouspensky has been sometimes, but take Gurdjieff, he talks about 'Faith, Hope and Love.' Have you read it? Then my advice is to read that, and find out what he says about faith—not about the Fourth Way.

You see, I'm a little bit, uh, leery to talk about Ouspensky when there is a book by Gurdjieff. It's very nice every once and a while as a little introduction here and there, but that's just about all. When Gurdjieff really took the trouble to write it, and knowing about whatever *chef d'oeuvre* Ouspensky had produced, there was definitely a reason that most likely he didn't like what Ouspensky had said, although whatever he may have said may be in accordance with Gurdjieff: good reporting of a few meetings in Moscow and St. Petersburg—that's all. If you have any sense of literature and you want to compare the level or the caliber of a book like All and Everything with that what is in Ouspensky's In Search of the Miraculous, I say if you have any sense of value, there cannot be any mistake. But read Gurdjieff if you want to know something about him.

No more questions, we stop.

New Questioner: Can you explain how ... what a fact is, and...

Mr. Nyland: A fact?

Questioner: Yes

Mr. Nyland: A fact is registered. A registration of that what exists, it becomes a fact. When it is translated in my mind as a concept for which I can find a word, it becomes a fact of existence. Fact, when I experience it myself, becomes for me not only the experience, but that what is part of me. A fact is when it is partly logical, partly assumed, and partly reasoned, but leading to a conclusion which is acceptable by me as a fact.

Questioner: I see.

Mr. Nyland: Why get stuck on the word fact?

Questioner: Well, I thought that the experience of a fact means that you...

Mr. Nyland: Yes. Right. What are facts for you. Don't you know? Your body exists, it's a fact.

Questioner: Well, you know, a fact is, uh, a short realization of your body.

Mr. Nyland: Not necessarily. It can be a fact that I have a thought. I can also say, "That's the truth" for a fact, in fact that is so. In fact, I have a feeling. I can say, "I love you, it's a fact." Whenever I want to make something as concrete as I can, I say it is a fact and illustrate it sometimes by means of pointing to something that has a form and then I say, "That is a fact of existence in matter."

But as I say, why get stuck on the word. We use it every day. It rains, you get wet, it's a fact. You eat food because you're hungry, it's a fact you are hungry. Your body needs it, it's a fact you are eating. That what you eat is a fact, and that can be eaten. Why is it so difficult. Don't become too philosophical. Don't start to question everything. Come down to Earth. I walk, it's a fact. My body is active, it's a fact. I think. I drink a glass of water, also that is a fact. I hit someone on the head, it's a fact. He curses me, also a fact. Concepts are facts. Even abstracts are facts. Even magnetism is a fact. Electronics, even if I cannot see them, are facts of existence for me.

Okay?

Yeah.

Miriam: You mentioned the Objective faculty, linking this up to my life. Could you talk more about that? Developing this Objective faculty in relationship...

Mr. Nyland: It is both ... it is called the process of Participation. It is at the time when the 'I' is considered sufficiently mature to have enough facts of Objectivity and to have enough recording, to have enough of something that makes it an entity to be able to stand on itself. And in comparing it with anything that grows to make it easier for one, I say it is like a body; I know it isn't, but it is something that I want to describe, like I describe God as a body or a good Father or sitting on the throne: I bring it down to the possibility of my mind being able to understand it.

So then when I say this 'I', now having been fed, has to prove that it actually exists and is worthwhile enough, so I invite it. When I now unconsciously do certain things, I ask this 'I' to come and look over my shoulder. I want, now, to see that what I am doing is in accordance with an Objective fact; that is, when I am now engaged in something of ordinary activity, I want to have in myself the possibility of being free from what I am doing. I want to be able to say I do not care what the result will be, because I am not attached to it. And the first way by which I apply the function of 'I' is when I consider the possibility of being Awake as an 'I' functioning.

Because in the state of wishing to be Awake, when I now try to make that attempt, I want to use the energies of my wish for the purpose of being Awake only—without description of anything of what I expect to be. And this is really the way I start to Work with ‘I’ in ordinary life: without expectation but with my full intention to be as honest as I can be regarding this Work, and in that attempt to try to remain Awake as long as I can in that activity. The longer, now, this I of my own, which is my subjective I, can now profit by the presence of a Conscious ‘I’, to that extent the Conscious ‘I’ will function as yeast in my brain, gradually spreading Objectivity in the midst of subjectivity. This we call a process of ‘Participation.’

All right? When it starts is another question: when is ‘I’ sufficiently grown up. It may be grown up in one tangential direction and already be applied early in Work, and it may last for a long time before there is any possibility of applying. About that there’s no rule; I just want to add that to it—in order to confuse it a little more.

So, I will see you sometime in the future? But I would advise you that if you are really honest and you really want to find out something about what the practical application of the philosophy in your life, that you must look up Gurdjieff, even if it goes via Ouspensky. Go ahead and Work, find out what is the value. Don’t withdraw, thinking that you know, because you don’t. And don’t think it is not worthwhile, because it is very much worthwhile. And if you want to consider it as a possibility which for you is your own and could actually at times be of great help, then it behooves you to find out a little bit about this man Gurdjieff. It may not lead to the knowledge of All and Everything, but it definitely will lead to a much better understanding of what you really are, and it might increase really your desire to wish to continue to live.

So, good night.

End of tape